

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 remain in this application. By this amendment, claims 1, 2, 5-7 and 9-11 are amended.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 and 5-11 under 35 USC 103 over Sandhu et al. and rejects claim 4 as obvious over Sandhu et al in view of Southwick. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. For the reasons given below, Applicants believe all claims should be allowed and respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider his rejection.

Sandhu et al. (USP 5,975,994) discloses a polishing pad 142 for polishing a wafer 110 and a conditioning element 170 for conditioning the polishing pad 142 in Figure 2 or 4. The claims of the application, on the other hand recite a grindstone for polishing the surface of a wafer. Southwick (USP 5,782,675) also discloses a polishing pad that is the same as the pad disclosed in Sandhu et al.

The first point of difference that must be noted is that the function of using a polishing pad is not the same as that of using the grindstone. The polishing pad is conditioned by the conditioning element 170 in Sandhu. The present specification discloses a polishing pad of this nature in the section entitled "Background Art," from line 9 of page 2 to line 2 of page 3. Further discussion of the use of a polishing pad and problems associated therewith are found from line 27 of page 6 to line 24 of page 10 in the specification. Here it is described that the polishing pad is dressed to provide a suitable surface roughness by applying a fixed load to the grindstone to press it to the rotating polishing tool and there are three problems.

In contrast, in the present invention, a grindstone is used for grinding the wafer in place of a polishing pad to solve the problems as described in lines 2-11 at page 11 in the specification.

The second point of difference is described at lines 13-20 of page 19 in the specification. A second moving means moves the dressing tool in a direction vertical to the plane polishing surface of said grindstone. In Sandhu, the conditioning element is pressed to the polishing pad


142 disclosed in the prior art by applying a fixed load as noted above. Applicants submit that there is no teaching in Sandhu of controlling vertical position rather than force. Note for example the discussion in Sadhu et al. at Col. 6, line 62 to Col. 7, line 23. Here, control of down-force, not control of position is discussed.

In view of the above noted differences, Applicants believe that all claims remaining in this application are in condition for allowance, prompt notice of which is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (202) 220-4200 to discuss any information concerning this application.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16, § 1.17, or § 1.136, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,


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